

# Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFG)



# FEMA

## AFG Narrative Get Ready Guide 2014

The Assistance to Firefighters Grants application period will be opening soon. This handy guide will give you a kick-start in prepping your grant application. It will also better prepare you to thoroughly answer application questions.

The primary goal of the AFG Program is to meet the firefighting and emergency response needs of fire departments, nonaffiliated emergency medical service organizations, and State Fire Training Academies (SFTA). AFG has helped firefighters, emergency medical responders, and SFTAs obtain critically needed equipment, protective gear, emergency vehicles, training, and other resources needed to protect the public and emergency personnel from fire and related hazards.

Be prepared to thoroughly explain, document, and provide background information on the following five areas:

- Organization and the community you serve
- Financial need
- Project description/justification for the budget
- Cost benefit
- Statement of effect

The following questions can help you formulate comprehensive answers on your application. Begin your discussion with a brief (no more than three sentences) opening statement as to what you are requesting and why. Then discuss the following:

### Organization and the Community Served

- In your own words, describe your organization.
- What are your special needs required to serve the community?

- Describe any special hazards in your community.
- What are the demands of your organization based on the needs of the community?

### Financial Need

- Why do you need federal assistance?
- Show current and future funding issues. Break your budget down showing costs and income; include third party or “soft billing” revenues.
- Describe local funding issues in the community; for example, recent bond proposal rejections or state/local taxing caps. Be specific in referencing these funding limitations.
- Show local unemployment percentages. Discuss any other local funding issues such as factory, business, or agency closings in your area.

### Project Description and Budget Justification

- What are you requesting? Be specific and discuss any and all items.
- Clearly discuss any “unique” equipment requests, such as technical rescue and why you need the requested items.
- For the most competitive application, select those need(s) that most closely align with the highest AFG program priority(ies).

**Example:** Organization “X” has *local needs* for an additional Fire Boat (> 20 feet) for their fleet, advanced Marine Firefighter training for members, and new PPE turnout gear to replace their entire 20 year old inventory.

- 1) Fire Boats are Low **L** priority for all organizations;
- 2) Marine Firefighter training is a Medium **M** priority for all organizations, but
- 3) Replacing obsolete PPE turnout gear is a High **H** priority for all organizations.

Organization “X” is eligible to apply for all three activities (Fire Boat under Vehicle Acquisition, and Marine Firefighting and PPE under Operations and Safety), but among these local needs, the PPE request (which matches the High **H** AFG program priority) will be the more competitive application with the best chance of being funded.

- Discuss costs for all items. How did you develop your cost estimate? Did you “shop around” or did you only use one single source/vendor? Be very clear on how you arrived at the cost figures.
- Is this an “existing” mission or a “new mission” request?

#### Cost Benefit

- What is the benefit to your department if the grant is awarded?
- How will the requested items improve fire ground operations and/or safety?

- If funded, what will the long-term value of the items be to your department?
- Will the requested items lower or increase your department’s operating costs?
- Since it is more cost effective than creating a new service, will you be expanding upon a pre-existing mission by providing training or equipment?

#### Statement of Effect

- What effect will your request, if funded, have on future fireground operations and/or safety?
- What effect, if any, will your request have on your future budget?
- Will your request require an increase in your annual operations budget? If so, how will you fund it in the future?
- If needed, will you provide any extra training for your requested equipment? If so, who will pay for it? If not, who will provide it? How will you evaluate the effectiveness of this training?
- What impact will this project have on your community?



## Vehicle Request

- If applying for a grant for a vehicle, the following items must be discussed in addition to the above-mentioned items.
- What do you want to replace and why?
- Does the current unit meet the latest NFPA standards?
- Does the current unit have an open cab or jump seats?
- Is the vehicle being replaced converted from its original purpose to function as an emergency vehicle?
- How will the requested unit improve fireground operations and safety to department members?
- Will the requested unit provide new tools/options you currently don't have?
- If replacing an older unit, justify the need as to why the current unit should be removed from service (if applicable).
- If asking for a new aerial, justify why you need it. Include any exposures you currently cannot respond to without this type of unit. Discuss the response and types of calls for this type of unit.
- What options will you be requesting on this unit and why? Be very specific. Are you adding options you currently do not have on your older unit? If so, why do you need the new options?
- Discuss your call volume for all types of vehicle requests. For brush units, discuss total acreage responded to and if the brush unit is a homemade type.
- Do you have an NFPA-approved driving program? If not, are you asking for one? If not, why not?
- Do you have an approved Emergency Vehicle Operator Curriculum and program? If not, are you asking for one? If not, why not?
- Do you have entry-level NFPA or DOT (where applicable) physicals for all members? If not, why not? As stated in the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA), both NFPA/DOT-approved physicals and driving programs are required for funding consideration.



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Questions regarding your grant award can be directed to FEMA's Grant Programs Directorate (GPD) AFG Program staff at 866-274-0960 or e-mail [firegrants@dhs.gov](mailto:firegrants@dhs.gov).